

		<h1>Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests</h1> <h1>NEWS</h1>
Green Mountain National Forest	Finger Lakes National Forest	
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Green Mountain National Forest Moves Forward with Two Forest Management Projects

Rutland Vermont— Two recent decisions will help the Green Mountain National Forest restore its program of active forest management. Forest officials have been concerned that they have not been meeting the goals of the 1987 ***Land and Resource Management Plan*** in recent years. Goals for timber harvests to improve habitat conditions for wildlife, for example, were put on hold in 1998 to study new information about the Indiana Bat and other threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

An environmental assessment was completed on the Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species in 2001 and a decision that amended the Forest Plan with updated conservation measures was put into place. At the present time, the Green Mountain National Forest has completed the environmental assessments for two timber sales and will be offering them soon. They include:

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1. **The Old Joe Project** located in Rochester and Chittenden, Vermont. This sale involves timber harvest on 316 acres of the Green Mountain National Forest. Goals for the sale include: improving wildlife habitat, creation of a wildlife opening, improving tree growth and diversity, regeneration of two aspen stands, and improvement to a mile of stream habitat. The Old Joe sale will be offered in late winter or spring. The Old Joe Project decision was appealed by several groups but was recently upheld by Randy Moore, the Forest Service Regional Forester for the Eastern Region.

2. **North Half Overstory Removal Project** involves 219 acres located in the Middlebury/Rochester Ranger District. The tree stands that are part of this sale are scattered throughout these districts. The Environmental Assessment for this project was released for comment in August of last year. Steve Kimball, District Ranger signed a decision for it on December 17, 2002. The alternative that was selected involves cutting of overstory trees on 17 stands. Regeneration of new young forests in these stands was initiated in the 1990's using the shelterwood method of harvest. With this harvest method, some mature trees are removed from a forest stand, and others are left in place. Removal of some trees provides light and growing space for a new trees, which begin to occupy the site from a combination of sources, including germination of seed on the forest floor, growth of existing seedlings, and sprouting from cut stumps.

The trees that are left in place provide shelter under which new young trees develop.

Once the new young forest becomes established and begins to grow, the young trees need increasing amounts of light and space in order to develop. At this point, the “shelter” or overstory trees are removed. This timber sale will also be offered in late winter or spring.

Actual operations on these sales is expected to begin in winter of 2003. According to the ***Land and Resource Management Plan***, of the 385,000 acres of the National Forest, timber harvesting can be done on about 46 percent of the land base. The focus of the Green Mountain National Forest timber management program is primarily to improve wildlife habitat, develop healthy forests, and contribute to sustainable communities with wood products, jobs, and revenues from timber harvesting.

For further information about either of these timber projects, contact District Ranger Stephen Kimball at (802) 767-4261, or Forest Management Team Leader Bill Culpepper at (802) 747-6758, or Silviculturist Chris Casey at (802) 388-4362.